

# **Court Collaborations In Technology and Access to Justice**

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Dedicated to the Memory of  
**Jim Pfeiffer**  
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Husband of our Colleague  
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# Outline

- The Case for Collaboration with Courts
- Courts and Legal Aid Perspective and Needs
- Opportunities and Models
- Practical Planning Steps and Strategic Choices
- Cautions and Risk Minimization
- Long Term Perspectives
- Building Supportive Networking and Infrastructure
- Conclusion

# The Case for Collaboration With Courts: Services and Strategy

- Why did Willie Sutton rob banks?
- Where the Cases are.
- Where the Data is.
- Where the Impact is.
- Influencing the Larger System.
- Building Long Term Credibility.
- Part of a 100% Access to Justice Strategy
- Broad Court Revolution in Mission

# Court Perspective and Needs

- Unmet Litigant Needs
- Neutrality Culture and Mandate
- Complex Tech Bureaucracies
- Budget Pressures
- Bar Relationships
- Supports and Transformation in Mission

# The Court Case Against Collaboration

- They Have Their Own Agenda
- They Can Not Make Decisions
- All They Believe in is the Full Counsel Model
- It Will Look Like We Are Not Neutral

# The Legal Aid Case Against Collaboration

- They Have Their Own Agenda
- They Can Not Make Decisions
- All They Believe in is Moving the Cases
- It Will Look Like We Are Not Advocates

# Approaches That Disentangle

- Serving All
- Producing Tools Versus Delivering Services
- Location and Funding Are Not Legal Identity
- Neutrality Does Not Require Disengagement
- Whose Program Is It?



# Opportunities and Models: Websites

- The Joint Vision
- Division of Labor Model
- The Channels Approach
- Content Labeling Approach
- Content Opportunities
- Funding Opportunities
- Marketing Opportunities

# Opportunities and Models: Document Assembly

- Court Form Approaches
- The Advocacy Dilemma and Options
- Document Assembly Infrastructure and Cost Sharing
- Content Costs and Burdens
- Multi-Lingual Challenges

# Opportunities and Models: Video

- Montana Model
- California Model
- Evaluation Conclusions
- Benefits of Court, Legal Aid, Pro Bono
- Lessons and Opportunities

# Opportunities and Models: Self Help Access

- Court Based Access
- Training, Support, Volunteers
- Data Feedback Linking Systems

# Opportunities and Models: Other Projects

- Triage and Diagnostic Tools
- Long Term Dynamic Triage
- Phone/Chat Help Collaborations
- Collaboration on Research and Innovation  
Impact Understanding (CA, OC, MN, MD)

# Practical Planning Steps and Strategic Choices

- Identifying the Court Partner
- Focusing on an Achievable Goal
- Within Courts Cultural Norms
- With Appropriate Division of Labor
- And Sustainability
- Using Access to Justice Bodies

# Cautions and Risk Minimization

- Explicit Division of Labor and Responsibility
- Manage Court/Legal aid/Bar Cultural Differences
- Be Sensitive to Different Constituencies

# Long Term Perspectives

- Common Problem, Common Data, Common Technology
- Different Roles in an Integrated System
- Building the Components to Support all Roles in that System



# Building National Supportive Networking and Infrastructure

- Self Represented Litigation Network
  - Working Groups and Legal Aid Role
- NCSC CTC Conference Planning
  - SRL Track ?
  - LSC Role
- National Capacity to Support Court Collaborative Initiatives
  - Document Assembly
  - Websites and Sustainability

# Planned SRLN Working Groups

- Information, Marketing and Outreach Working Group;
- **Research and Evaluation Working Group;**
- Best Practices and Models of Excellence Group:
  - Promotion of Self Help Offices and Services Subgroup;
  - Promotion of Attorney and Volunteer Participation and Discrete Task' Representation Subgroup;
  - **Promotion of Forms, Document Assembly and Electronic Filing;**
  - **Promotion of Courtroom Services and Support;**
  - Promotion of Judicial Training, Educational Materials and Networking;
- **Problem Assessment/Triage Working Group;**
- **Appropriate Relief Working Group;**
- Overall System Working Group; and,
- Funding Working Group.

# Discussion

- Examples from the Field
- Issues, Questions, and Solutions
- How Can We Support and Broaden

# Conclusion

- Risks versus Benefits
- Long Term Transformative Impact
- Help for Millions